

DAILY BULLETIN

DECEMBER 8, 2004

DECEMBER 10 MARKS HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

Commemorates adoption of U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1

POWELL SAYS OSCE DOES NOT HAVE “DOUBLE STANDARDS”

Speaks to Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe ministerial..... 2

FACT SHEET ON U.S. DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

U.S. is largest contributor of official and private sector aid 3

U.S. ENERGY DEPARTMENT FUNDS NEW FUSION ENERGY EXPERIMENT

Magnetic confining of superheated gas may produce new energy source..... 5

DECEMBER 10 MARKS HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

Commemorates adoption of U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights

By Carrie Lee

Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- In observance of Human Rights Day on December 10, President Bush is expected to issue a proclamation on the importance of human rights for Americans and all peoples of the world. Human Rights Day commemorates the United Nations General Assembly's adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948.

Established in 1950, Human Rights Day also serves as an opportunity for the international community to celebrate human rights and human rights defenders and to reflect on the principles set forth in the declaration. For 2004, the 56th anniversary of the declaration, the United Nations has dedicated Human Rights Day as a tribute to human rights educators worldwide.

Considered one of the first major achievements of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the foundation of international human rights law. Under the energetic and determined leadership of American Eleanor Roosevelt, the declaration drafters overcame significant differences in ideology, political systems, economic development and religious and cultural backgrounds among the then-58 U.N. members to draft a remarkable and enduring instrument.

The declaration is a groundbreaking document on many levels. It was the first document to articulate

in detail the idea of universal human rights and fundamental freedoms, and also the first document to espouse universal principles adopted by an international organization. The declaration sets forth the principles of justice, equality, and dignity as indivisible human rights of every man, woman and child. According to the declaration, “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights” and the “inherent dignity of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.”

The declaration arose during the aftermath of World War II when the international community recognized the need for a codified instrument for human rights protection. The eight members of the declaration’s drafting committee -- from Australia, Chile, China, France, Lebanon, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States -- found commonality in their underlying respect for fundamental rights and freedoms. The declaration, the culmination of the two-year drafting process, included the right to life, liberty and security of person; the right to freedom of opinion and expression; the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; and the right to freedom from torture.

Despite the conflicting views of some member states, the declaration also held that these rights were universal and inherent to humanity, regardless of race, sex or religion.

Through the efforts of Roosevelt and her colleagues, the General Assembly voted to adopt the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948 -- with 48 states in favor, eight abstentions and two countries not present.

Over 50 years later, the legacy of the declaration is pervasive. As Eleanor Roosevelt hoped in 1948, the declaration has indeed “become the international Magna Carta of all men everywhere.” Although it is not a legally binding document, the declaration has acquired the status of customary law -- a law that, although unwritten, reflects state practices and has the support of the international community as a practice that is required by law.

Furthermore, the declaration has inspired more than 60 human rights instruments, including legally binding treaties like the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. This covenant, ratified in 1976, details the civil and political rights of individuals and nations, including the right to life and liberty and the right to self-determination. Over 150 states, including the United States, are states parties to the covenant.

In addition, the principles outlined in the declaration have been enshrined in the constitutions of up to 90 countries, and it has been translated into 300 languages.

The United States, as a supporter of human rights worldwide, honors the significance of human rights protection and the efforts of human rights defenders on Human Rights Day and throughout the year. Through its support of human rights programs in over 100 countries, the United States is working with human rights defenders to make the principles outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights a reality in the life of all nations and peoples.

As President Bush stated in his 2003 Human Rights Day proclamation, “freedom is the right of mankind and the future of every nation. It is not America’s gift to the world; it is God’s gift to every man and woman who lives in the world.”

POWELL SAYS OSCE DOES NOT HAVE “DOUBLE STANDARDS”

Speaks to Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe ministerial

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell flatly rejects suggestions that the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has “double standards” when it comes to election monitoring and other field activities in former Soviet republics as compared with more established democracies.

“I categorically disagree,” Powell said in a speech to the OSCE Ministerial Council in Sofia, Bulgaria December 7. The OSCE’s 17 field missions are among its most important assets and are working to advance for democracy, human rights and conflict resolution “from the Balkans to Central Asia.”

“All OSCE participating states signed up to the proposition that fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law are of legitimate concern to us all,” he noted.

Powell said the OSCE is closely following the situation in Ukraine and urged the 55 participating states to provide fiscal and manpower resources needed to monitor

the new presidential runoff election there. "All of us in the OSCE community have an interest in a swift, peaceful outcome through a democratic process," he said.

The secretary said Russia's commitments to withdraw military forces from Moldova and to agree with Georgia on the duration of the Russian military presence there "remain unfulfilled."

He expressed concern over the state of democratization in some OSCE states, such as developments affecting freedom of the press and the rule of law in Russia. "Belarus remains an egregious example of a participating state failing to live up to its OSCE commitments," Powell said.

Citing numerous OSCE accomplishments and ongoing challenges, such as efforts to combat racial and ethnic hatred, xenophobia and discrimination, Powell said the OSCE "would take an important step forward by responding positively to requests from the Palestinian Authority and from Iraq for election observers."

He expressed confidence that the OSCE "will continue to serve as a major force for human dignity, democracy, prosperity and security."

FACT SHEET ON U.S. DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

U.S. is largest contributor of official and private sector aid

Following is a State Department fact sheet on U.S. development assistance. All statistics are derived from U.S. Government sources unless otherwise indicated.

U.S. Department of State
International Information Programs
December 7, 2004

Fact Sheet: U.S. Development Assistance

"We fight against poverty because hope is an answer to terror. We fight against poverty because opportunity is a fundamental right to human dignity. We fight against poverty because faith requires it and conscience demands it. And we fight against poverty with a growing conviction

that major progress is within our reach."

-- President George W. Bush

Food Aid

The United States has long been a leader in the fight against hunger and poverty.

The United States is the world's largest provider of food aid (\$2.4 billion in 2003) and is the leading contributor to the World Food Program, donating \$1.4 billion in 2003.

In 2002, the United States contributed 64.9% of the world's total food aid, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. For more details see:
<http://www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves/September04/Features/usfoodaid.htm>

The United States actively promotes agricultural development programs around the world, providing almost \$500 million in such assistance in 2003. New technologies, with proper market incentives, may hold the key to raising agricultural productivity and ending hunger.

Economic Development Aid and the Millennium Challenge Corporation

In 2002 President Bush proposed a new compact for development that increases accountability for rich and poor nations alike, linking greater contributions by developed nations to greater responsibility by developing nations. This new compact recognizes that economic development assistance can be successful only if it is linked to sound policies in developing countries.

As part of that commitment, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) aims to direct significant official development assistance (ODA) allocations to support domestic policies propitious for growth and lasting development. The U.S. Congress approved close to \$1 billion for fiscal year 2004 for the so-called Millennium Challenge Account and \$1.5 billion for 2005.

The MCC allocates resources based on quantitative measures of how the governments of developing countries are following through on their commitments to govern justly, to invest in their country's people and to allow economic freedom.

In actual dollars, the United States is currently the world's largest contributor of ODA, providing \$15.8 billion in 2003, or 23 percent out of the world total of \$68.5

billion. U.S. ODA increased 16.9 percent in real terms in 2003, while EU ODA increased 2.2 percent in real terms. (Source: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development)

Most importantly, the United States is leading international efforts to bring good governance, transparency, entrepreneurship, and other sound economic policies to developing countries so they may unlock unutilized capital and create incentives for lasting growth.

U.S. Private Sector Development Aid

But official development assistance tells only part of the story. As the 2004 UN report "Unleashing Entrepreneurship: Making Business Work for the Poor" makes clear, domestic private sector resources dwarf traditional development assistance.

The United States is the top importer of goods from developing countries, importing \$680 billion in 2003, 10 times greater than all ODA to developing countries from all donors.

The United States is the number one source of private capital to developing countries, averaging \$36 billion annually between 1997 and 2000.

And the United States leads the world in charitable donations to developing countries -- \$4 billion in 2000.

Remittances

While worker remittances to developing countries can only be estimated, experts believe that the total value of remittances is considerably larger than official development assistance and is sometimes more important to developing economies. The World Bank estimates that, out of a world total of \$111 billion in remittances in 2001, 65 percent or 72.3 billion flowed to developing countries. The Inter-American Development Bank estimates that 75 percent of remittances to Latin America and the Caribbean come from the United States.

U.S. Disaster Assistance

The Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), a part of the U.S. State Department's Agency for International Development (USAID), provides help in recovering from disasters around the world. In 2004, with a budget of over \$300 million, OFDA had by November responded to 69 disaster declarations in 58 countries.

OFDA has provided assistance through implementing partners and/or deployed teams in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Latin America. The assistance has included support in Iran and Morocco after earthquakes, the locust emergency that threatens food crops in northwest Africa, and drought and food emergencies in such countries as Angola and Eritrea.

Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

This \$15 billion initiative to combat disease in more than 100 countries around the world has a special focus on 15 nations in Africa, the Caribbean and Asia. The Emergency Plan aims to treat two million HIV-infected persons with anti-retroviral therapy, prevent seven million new infections, and provide care and support for 10 million persons infected with or affected by HIV, including orphans and vulnerable children.

The United States is the largest donor of AIDS relief, contributing more than twice the amount of all other donors combined for the alleviation and prevention of AIDS.

Other International Development Initiatives

There are many other U.S. international development initiatives - in March 2003 alone President Bush announced 19 such initiatives. The Presidential Initiatives implemented in part or whole by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) direct funding to key programs in health, education, environment, infrastructure, and trade in 143 developing countries. A few samples:

Hygiene and Sanitation Improvement Initiative

USAID announced in April 2004 plans to invest \$70 million over a nine-year period on targeted health programs aimed at the prevention of diarrheal diseases, a leading killer of vulnerable populations, including approximately 2 million children under five every year.

Afghanistan Road Initiative

All of the 389 kilometers (242 miles) of the U.S. portion of the Kabul-Kandahar Highway were completed by December 2003. As a result, more than 35 percent of Afghanistan's 20.6 million residents, who live near this portion of the highway and use it for economic opportunities, will cut their travel times in half.

Africa Education Initiative

As many as 25,000 educators have been trained so far under this initiative, and candidates from more than 30 Sub-Saharan countries have been identified for scholarships.

Initiative to End Hunger in Africa

Thousands of communities benefited from more than 30 new agricultural technologies based on USAID efforts. The technology include: new fertilization techniques to help 10,000 households; plant hybridization, which aims to assist 4,000 farmers and distribute more than 64,000 plants; stress tolerant crops to be delivered to 250,000 households in nine countries; and more. Nine new biotechnology programs were also initiated.

Clean Energy Initiative

As a result of this initiative, electrification in under-developed communities in India has extended the number of hours individuals can work, helped send children to school, and reduced the average household monthly electricity bill by about 50 percent. Under the Global Village Energy Partnership, improved energy sources have contributed to better economic and social services for more than five million people.

Digital Freedom Initiative

Since its inception in March 2003, the initiative has launched innovative efforts in Senegal to expand information and communications technologies for micro, small, and medium enterprises. It is also working to represent the IT industry to government and regional decision makers in an effort to move telecommunication reforms forward in Senegal. Activities under this program will commence in Peru and Indonesia this year.

Water for the Poor

This initiative helped give 19 million people improved access to safe and sanitized water supplies. In the West Bank, wells and pipelines nearly doubled the amount of water available to 400,000 residents. In Eritrea, USAID funded the provision of emergency water supplies and the creation of a sustainable management system, helping 35,000 people affected by recurring droughts.

For more information about Presidential Initiatives, please visit:

http://www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/presidential_initiative

U.S. ENERGY DEPARTMENT FUNDS NEW FUSION ENERGY EXPERIMENT

Magnetic confining of superheated gas may produce new energy source

U.S. researchers have begun a novel experiment that will test whether nature's way of confining high-temperature gas might lead to a new source of energy for the world, according to a December 6 Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) press release.

The Levitated Dipole Experiment (LDX), sponsored by the Department of Energy Office of Fusion Energy Sciences, is the United States' newest approach to nuclear fusion. Fusion energy is advantageous because its hydrogen fuel is practically limitless and the resulting energy would be clean and, unlike fossil fuels, would not contribute to global warming.

The term dipole refers to uneven distribution of magnetic or electrical characteristics in a substance so that it acts as though it has two equal but opposite poles or charges, separated by a small distance.

The LDX confines high-temperature ionized gas, called plasma, using strong magnetic fields from a half-ton superconducting ring inside a huge vessel reminiscent of a spaceship. X-ray spectroscopy and visible photography have recorded spectacular images of the hot, confined plasma and of the dynamics of matter confined by strong magnetic force fields.

Fusion energy is the energy source of the sun and stars. Scientists will use the LDX experiment to conduct basic studies of confined high-temperature matter and investigate whether the plasma may someday be used to produce fusion energy on Earth.

Text of the MIT press release follows:

Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Press release, December 6, 2004

MIT, Columbia begin new energy experiment

Half-ton levitating ring is key to work

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. -- MIT and Columbia University students and researchers have begun operation of a novel experiment that confines high-temperature ionized gas, called plasma, using the strong magnetic fields from a half-ton superconducting ring inside a huge vessel reminiscent of a spaceship. The experiment, the first of its kind, will test whether nature's way of confining high-temperature gas might lead to a new source of energy for the world.

First results from the Levitated Dipole Experiment (LDX) were presented at a meeting of the American Physical Society the week of Nov. 15. Scientists and students described more than 100 plasma discharges created within the new device, each lasting from 5 to 10 seconds. X-ray spectroscopy and visible photography recorded spectacular images of the hot, confined plasma and of the dynamics of matter confined by strong magnetic force fields.

A dedication for LDX, the United States' newest approach to nuclear fusion, was held in late October. Fusion energy is advantageous because its hydrogen fuel is practically limitless and the resulting energy would be clean and would not contribute to global warming as does the burning of fossil fuels.

Scientists using the LDX experiment will conduct basic studies of confined high-temperature matter and investigate whether the plasma may someday be used to produce fusion energy on Earth. Fusion energy is the energy source of the sun and stars. At high temperature and pressure, light elements like hydrogen are fused together to make heavier elements, such as helium, in a process that releases large amounts of energy.

Powerful magnets, such as the ring in LDX, provide the magnetic fields needed to initiate, sustain and control the plasma in which fusion occurs. Because the shape of the magnetic force fields determines the properties of the confined plasma, several different fusion research experiments are under way throughout the world, including a second experiment at MIT, the Alcator C-Mod, and the HBT-EP experiment at Columbia University.

LDX tackles fusion with a unique approach, taking its cue from nature. The primary confining fields are created by a powerful superconducting ring about the size of a

truck tire and weighing more than a half-ton that will ultimately be levitated within a large vacuum chamber. A second superconducting magnet located above the vacuum chamber provides the force necessary to support the weight of the floating coil. The resulting force field resembles the fields of the magnetized planets, such as Earth and Jupiter. Satellites have observed how these fields can confine plasma at hundreds of millions of degrees.

The LDX research team is led by Jay Kesner, senior scientist at MIT's Plasma Science and Fusion Center (PSFC) (who earned his Ph.D. from Columbia University in 1970), and Michael Mauel, a professor of applied physics at Columbia University (who earned his degrees from MIT, S.B. 1978, S.M. 1979, Sc.D. 1983).

Kesner and Mauel's colleagues on the experiment include five graduate students (Alex Boxer, Jennifer Ellsworth, Ishtak Karim and Scott Mahar of MIT and Eugenio Ortiz of Columbia) and two undergraduates (Austin Roach and Michelle Zimmermann of MIT). The team also includes Columbia scientists Darren Garnier and Alex Hansen, as well as Rick Latons, Phil Michael, Joseph Minervini, Don Strahan and Alex Zhukovsky of the PSFC.

The work is sponsored by the Department of Energy's Office of Fusion Energy Sciences.

Pleases Note: Most texts and transcript mentioned in the U.S. Mission Daily Bulletin are available via our homepage: www.usmission.ch

Select "Washington File" from the top menu bar.